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ABSTRACT

An evaluation of the School Readiness Program is presented in detail. Each of four objectives is examined: (1) To provide effective teaching-learning settings; (2) To determine and alleviate health problems; (3) To develop language skills; and (4) To develop Spanish language skills for children in bilingual centers. The accomplishments of the program are noted and recommendations for further development are listed. (SBT)

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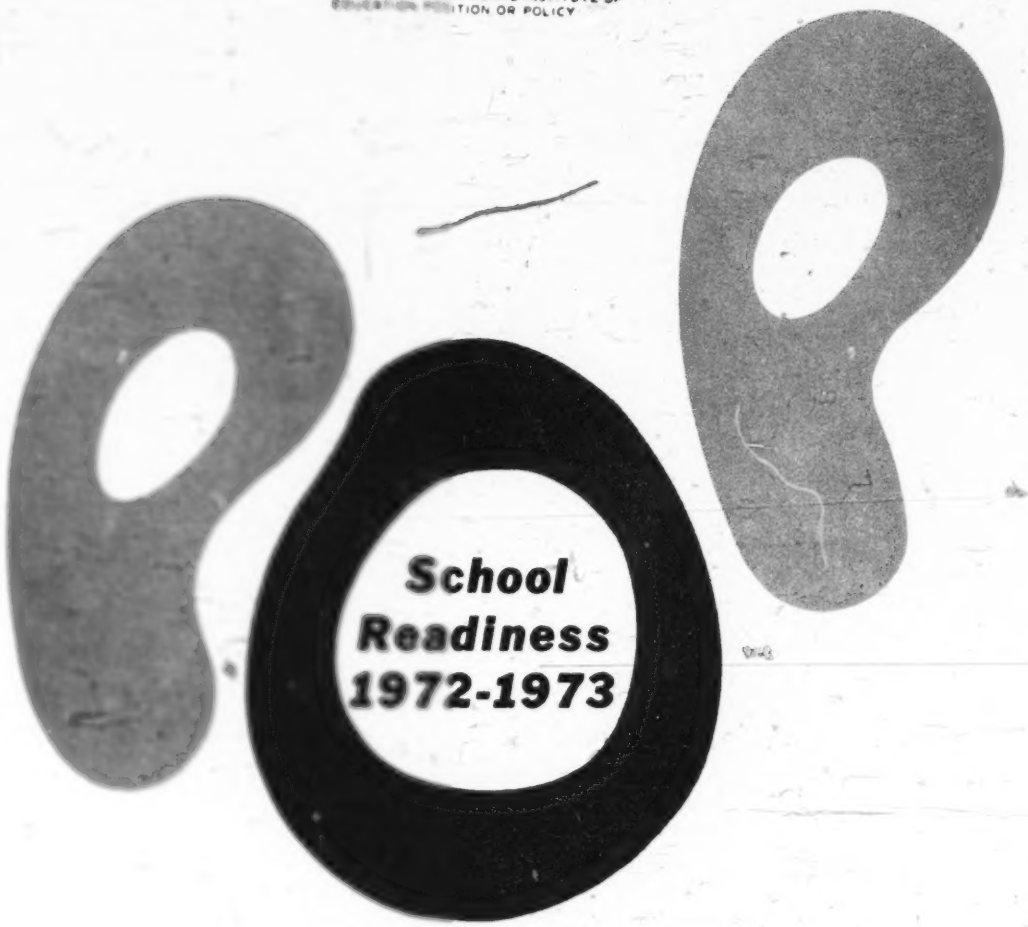

PROFILES OF PROGRESS

An Evaluative Report

PS 007114

HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS-249 HIGH STREET-HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06103

Date August 1973

1972-73 SADC - TITLE I ESEA PROJECT EVALUATION

Town Hartford | Period of Program: school year only

Prgm Director Mrs. Corrie Sadler | Project Number: | Program Funds:

Prgm Evaluator Wallace Roby | SG 64-9 | Title I,Pt.C: $ 24,162
64-2 (21) | Title I 60,000
Descriptive Title of Program: | R64-2 | Title I Realloc 42,042
Local 106,320

School Readiness

1. Program Participants

Total public school pupils 360

Grade level: Pre-kindergarten

2. Economic and educational criteria used to select pupils for services of the program: Rejected Headstart Program applicants; applicant who is resident in one of Hartford's culturally disadvantaged areas; absence of the principal wage earner in the household, or unemployment of the principal wage earner.

3. Number and type of staff to whom SADC or Title I funds were paid:

1 director	10 paraprofessionals	2 clerks
10 teachers	1 community aide	

4. Principle objectives related to pupils' achievement and attitudes:
   - Provide effective teaching-learning situations for children
   - Determine and alleviate health problems of children
   - Develop language skills
   - Develop Spanish as well as English language skills for children in bilingual centers

5. Description of program activities and services:

Ten preschool centers located in Hartford, West Hartford, and Wethersfield served 360 four and five year old children from Hartford Title I school attendance areas during the 1972-73 school year. The centers are located in church, synagogue, and school settings. Children were bussed to a morning or an afternoon session of two and one half hours duration.

The two and one half hour sessions daily offered children opportunities for physical, intellectual, and social growth. In two settings, 80 Puerto Rican children were instructed in both Spanish and English.

The School Readiness teachers included parents in the children's program. Parents also make up the School Readiness Board of Directors which is active in policy-making decisions for the Program.

EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVES

The four objectives cited for the School Readiness Program have been evaluated in the following way:

Objective 1: Provide effective teaching-learning settings

This objective was evaluated by having two Early Childhood Education consultants visit the School Readiness centers while the program was in progress, once in the fall and again in the spring, and report their findings. Their statements are entitled ON-SITE OBSERVATION and can be found on pages 3 - 6 of this evaluation.

Objective 2: Determine and alleviate health problems of children

The Visiting Nurse Association of Hartford, Inc. provided public health nursing services to ten School Readiness centers. Reports from individual nurses were analyzed and summarized by the Executive Director of the Association. Her report entitled HEALTH ASPECTS can be found on pages 7-9.

Objective 3: Develop language skills

Testers from the Hartford Public School Psychological Department administered the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test to School Readiness children in the fall and in the spring. Test results were analyzed by a State Department of Education evaluator and used to determine children's language growth during the program year. This report is entitled LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH SPEAKING CHILDREN and can be found on pages 10 - 14.

Objective 4: Develop Spanish language skills for children in bilingual centers

The Tests of General Abilities were administered in the fall and again in the spring to Spanish speaking children under the direction of the Hartford Public School Psychological Department. The results were analyzed by a State Department of Education evaluator and are reported on pages 15 - 20 of this evaluation under the heading of VOCABULARY AND NUMBER TEST RESULTS FOR SPANISH SPEAKING CHILDREN.

ON-SITE OBSERVATION

"On-site observation" has been made in two visits to each group; two full classroom sessions, once in the fall and again in the spring; spending a seven-to-eight hour day with each teacher and aide and the parents helping at school that day. This time has made possible a relaxed, informal sharing of experiences with the children among teachers, aides and helping parents, many of whom had long term involvement in the School Readiness Program.

Invited to accompany Dr. Nash, this observer noted particularly the strong group feeling and communication among School Readiness staff. This is outstanding when one notes that eight of the ten locations are in suburban churches, over a wide geographic area, one classroom in each church.

With the enthusiasm and spirit shown by staff and parents, it is feasible that these suggestions (attached) might provide the basis for the School Readiness Staff Development Program in 1973-74.

The following accomplishments and suggestions for further consideration are submitted by Dr. Harriet Nash, Early Childhood Consultant, who continues her keen interest and support to School Readiness. In 1967 parents enlisted her aid to help them to become teachers and to make possible their children's "school readiness".

Marjorie Maynard
Associate Consultant
Early Childhood Education
State Department of Education

Accomplishments

1. Programs from center to center more uniformly good than noted in any former observations, notably:

- Wide and varied use of facilities, materials, and equipment as an integral part of total program (as opposed to "work" vs "play" activity) with generally careful and supportive staff supervision.
- Noticeably stable relationships and mutual support between teachers and aides.
- Noticeably responsive and freely talking children throughout the program.
- Greater adaptability of staff to new ideas and directions in their work.

2. Progress of staff toward certification beginning to show measureable results:

- One teacher will complete her Bachelor degree credits and certification eligibility in the spring of '74on performing the required practice teaching hours.
- The director will have completed her Bachelor degree requirements by the spring of 1974 and is already working in a Masters program.

Most staff members appear to feel more secure in their roles. Their increasing experience is beginning to provide them with a basis for judgment and decisions in regard to their programs and in relation to selection of activities more meaningful for the children.

The School Readiness program is to be commended for the development of a secure and valuable experience for young children which is well deserving of continued support and encouragement.

Suggestions for Further Consideration

Any program which is growing and changing in order to meet the needs of its members always has areas which can be studied, strengthened or changed. The following comments are offered as some suggestions from an outside observation:

- The use of volunteers is a very necessary and valuable aspect of the program. However, their presence required additional supervision on the part of the teacher. The board and staff might well consider together the best means for selection and involvement of volunteers, their orientation and training, and some plan for scheduling their attendance or filling absences. Carefully planned use of good volunteers could provide assistance to the teacher at noontime and during the first hour of the afternoon program while the aide takes her luncheon break. Teachers are left alone with the group for a full hour and in many instances children are shortchanged and unchallenged.
- In many instances the children themselves might well take more responsibility within the routines of the program and enjoy the learning experiences which accompany them. Staff might ask themselves, "What could the children do in the program which adults are now doing for them?" i.e., checking their own and others attendance each day; making sandwiches or

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other more creative preparation of snacks (in some instances the teacher or aide prepares the snacks away from the children leaving children unsupervised in the process): moving from one area to another singly or in small groups, responsible themselves for order and any necessary quiet, rather than having to "line up" under staff surveillance; continuing valuable work or play activity to a natural or desired conclusion, rather than arbitrarily having to stop to suit a teacher's set schedule.

- Some centers appear to contain rather meager equipment or supplies. Staff and board members might wish to study the adequacy of materials available in each center. Are differences due to staff preference? to inadequacy of initial supplies? to destructiveness or inadequate care of materials? to inability to set an <u>environment</u> through which children can learn (and tending to rely largely on verbal interchange)? Considerable real and relevant learning can take place when children are free to use and explore a variety of materials, to discover their properties and to work out ideas and plans with friends.

Harriet Nash
Early Childhood Consultant
Kensington, Connecticut

HEALTH ASPECTS

A Report to the School Readiness Program From the Visiting Nurse Association of Hartford, Inc.

During the 1972-1973 school year, the VNA provided public health nursing service to ten School Readiness Centers. The total number of hours of service was 358.

Vision screening was participated in by 339 youngsters. 253 passed the screening test; 64 still have summer appointments for re-screening; 12 are being followed by private medical doctors; 10 have had a series of appointments which have not been kept.

345 youngsters took the hearing screening test. 309 passed; 30 have upcoming appointments fro rescreening; 3 are being followed by private medical doctors; 3 have had several "not kept" appointments.

313 youngsters had their urine screened for lead. Three showed questionable findings and follow up showed two to be within normal limits. Followup is not yet completed in the third instance. Since the Community Renewal Team's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program was initiated during this school year, the urine testing was a duplication. Blood levels of lead as done by the C.R.T. team are more accurate screening tests than are the urine tests.

The following summarizes the health problems on which nurses, teachers and parents worked together:

Health Problem	Number of Youngsters
Speech	7
Ear, Nose & Throat	2
Chronic health problems e.g. seizures, cardiac, asthma	6
Incomplete immunizations	2
Dental caries	1
Vision problems	6
Rashes	2
Lead follow-up	3
Growth & development, behavior, hyperactivity	18
Miscellaneous	5
Total	52

In the above instances, 10 of the youngsters were referred to their private medical doctor; 24 were referred to various clinics and other health resources. Nine youngsters and their families are receiving ongoing public health nursing service because of multiple family health problems. In 9 instances, observation of the child and exploration of the problem showed that no referral was indicated at the present time.

The Visiting Nurse Association's Rehabilitation Nursing Consultant was used in evaluating youngsters as needed and interagency case conferences were also helpful in pooling available resources to solve health problems.

Although priority was given to identification of health problems and getting youngsters under appropriate care, there was still time in some of the Centers for the nurse to be involved with the teacher in health teaching. Care of teeth, the importance of milk, daily hygiene, good nutrition, equipment used in physical examinations were some of the areas on which work with the youngsters was done.

RUTH D. ABBOTT
Executive Director
Visiting Nurse Association
of Hartford, Inc.

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test has been administered each fall and each spring to children in the School Readiness Program centers. Testers from the Hartford Public School Psychological Department have administered the instrument for the past three years.

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) measures children's receptive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary means words that children understand but not necessarily words they use in speech. For very young children, the instrument is often interpreted as a measure of their language development.

PPVT Results Over A Three Year Period

Group results for all the children in the program have been presented in Table 1 below. It can be noted that the mean raw scores and standard deviations are very similar for each of the three years. Also, the value of t indicates that children have made highly significant language gains from the beginning to the end of each school year.

Table 1

PPVT Results for School Readiness Children from 1970-1973

Test Date	No. of Children	Average Age at Testing	PPVT Test Form	Average Raw Score	Standard Deviation	t
1970-71 Children						
Oct 1970	206	4-3	B	33.00	11.28	35.34**
May 1971	206	4-11	A	43.25	8.37	
1971-72 Children						
Oct 1971	211	4-4	A	34.37	11.59	8.54**
May 1972	211	5-0	B	43.08	9.08	
1972-73 Children						
Oct 1972	217	4-3	A	34.90	10.41	8.85**
May 1973	217	4-11	B	42.86	8.26	

** Significant $< .01$

PPVT Results for 1972-73

Converting the 1972-73 PPVT raw scores into an index of the level of development, it can be shown that School Readiness children on the whole gained 9 months of language over a period of 8 months that elapsed between testing. This is judged as good language progress.

Additional Analyses of PPVT Scores

Previous years

In 1970-71, PPVT scores were analyzed to find out whether language progress from center to center differed. No significant differences were found. However, in comparing the centers making the highest language scores with those making the lowest, the amount of parent involvement in center activities was highest where language scores were highest. Class size, chronological age, boy-girl ratio, staff absences, pupil absences, and pupil mobility were no different in the comparisons made.

In 1971-72 PPVT scores were determined for each center and presented in graph form. Three factors were discussed which pointed out why it was difficult to determine differences among centers: (1) Where the number of children making up the average PPVT score was small, the average score fluctuated greatly whenever a single score was very high or very low; (2) Age differences at the time of PPVT testing favored the older students; and (3) Differences in pre-test averages from class to class had some effect on what posttest scores would be.

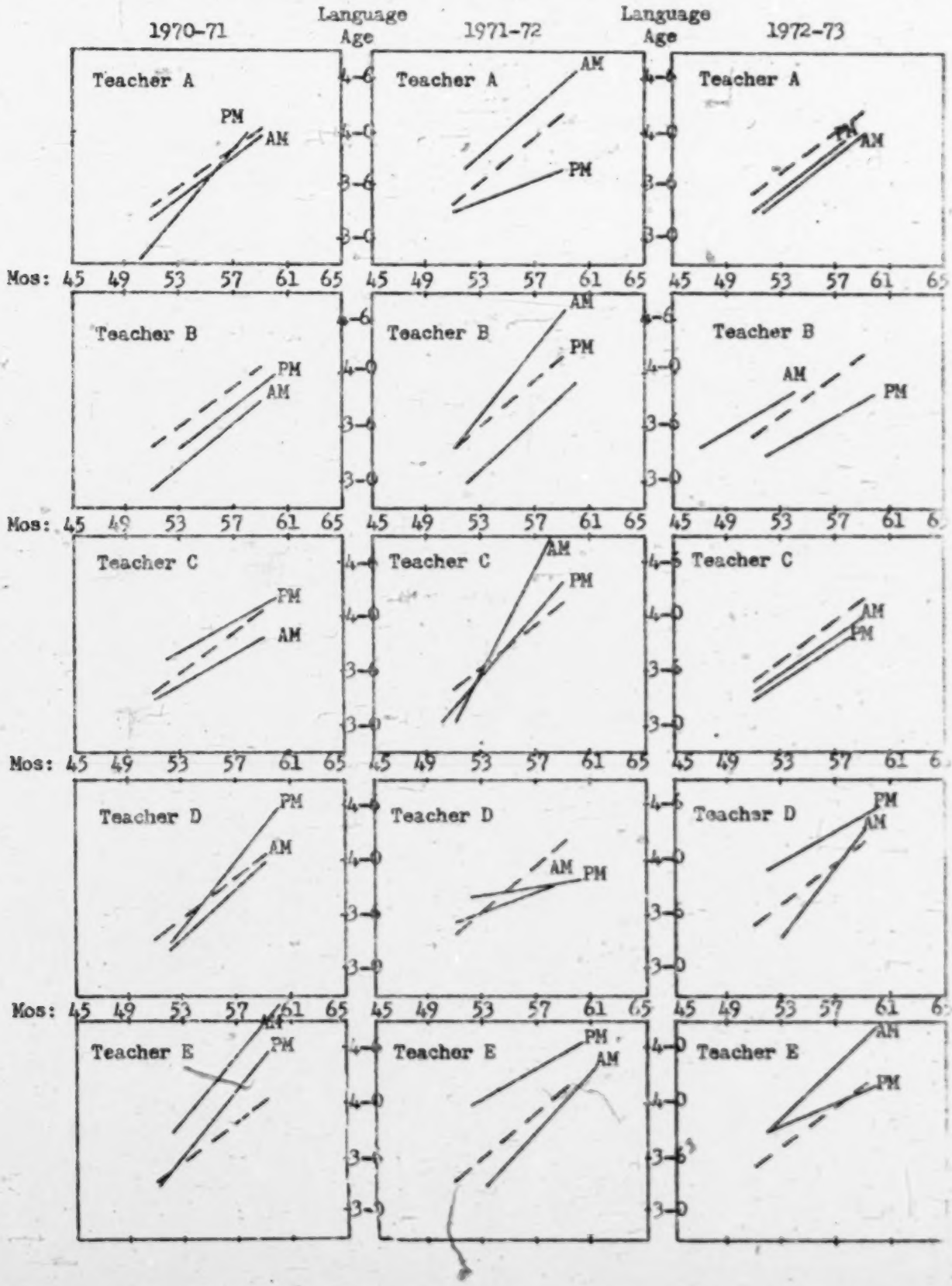
A PPVT follow-up study of children entering School Readiness in September 1970 was also included in the 1971-72 program evaluation. It was found that School Readiness children progressed as well in kindergarten as they did during their School Readiness year. Further, the School Readiness children were found scoring significantly higher on the PPVT than other kindergarten children. Since there was no citywide first grade testing in Hartford in 1972-73, the progress of the School Readiness children being followed-up could not be addressed in the 72-73 evaluation.

Current year

In this, the 1972-73 program evaluation, an effort has been continued to learn more about what PPVT scores tell us. In this year's analysis, PPVT results for children are presented graphically for those centers where the teachers have not changed over the last three years.

Language growth of children in these centers are illustrated as line segments connecting their average pre and posttest scores ... the steeper the slope of the line, the greater the progress. Language age growth has been charted against children's average age in months at pre and posttesting. The reader should keep in mind that pretest PPVT averages should be higher for children who on the average are older chronologically.

THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF PPVT RESULTS FOR SCHOOL READINESS
CENTERS WHERE THE TEACHERS HAVE NOT CHANGED



The following observations are made from the graphs of Figure 1:

1. The slopes of the lines for combined School Readiness centers (broken lines) are consistent in all the graphs while the slopes of lines showing language growth for individual classes vary among centers and from year to year.

2. Poor language growth patterns are shown in only four of the 30 classes graphed. These did not occur during a single year or for a single teacher. Over a three year period, no center had "consistently better" or "consistently poorer" language growth patterns when the progress of children in these centers was compared to the average for all School Readiness children.

3. Morning classes of School Readiness generally showed better patterns of language growth than afternoon classes. Seven A.M. classes showed greater growth (steeper line slopes) than the average for all children; six classes were generally the same as the average for all School Readiness children; and only two of the 15 afternoon classes over the three year period showed language growth greater than that for combined School Readiness children.

The current year PPVT evaluation attempted to control for children's age, time of testing, and the program teachers and their respective teaching-learning settings. It is concluded that these three factors do not account in a major way for the variations in PPVT language growth patterns of children situated in the various School Readiness settings.

The analysis did indicate that morning classes of School Readiness children have generally showed greater language growth patterns than afternoon classes.

Wallace R. Roby
Compensatory Education Evaluation
Connecticut State Department
of Education

VOCABULARY AND NUMBER TEST RESULTS FOR SPANISH SPEAKING CHILDREN

The Tests of General Abilities, Inter-American Series were administered to Spanish-speaking children in the Ann Street and the Beth Israel centers. Different testers were used in the fall and spring. However, both testers worked under the direction of the Hartford Public School Psychological Department.

The 14 item Part I Oral Vocabulary and the 6 item Part II Number sections of the Preschool Level instrument, administered first in Spanish and secondly in English, have been analyzed in this evaluation. Of the 45 children available in the fall for testing from the two centers, complete pre and posttest results in Spanish were obtained for 26 children, while complete pre and posttest results in English were obtained for 16 children. Withdrawals from the program accounted for the loss of eight children's results; absence at time of testing accounted for three more; two children refused testing; 14 children did not know English well enough to take both the Spanish and English editions, and 14 children's results were not available because post-testing began too late to test all children.

Each item in each part of the Tests of General Ability was presented to each child individually by means of a card on which was printed three, four, or five drawings. The examiner presented the card and told the child what to do. The child responded by putting his finger on one of the drawings. No oral responses were

required.

In the absence of national norms for the test, scores of the 1972-73 children were compared to those of two other groups. One group was the 1971-72 children in the Beth Israel center. The other group was 1971-72 Headstart children from New Haven who were "matched" to Beth Israel children. Beth Israel's 1971-72 program was bilingual as was Hartford's 1972-73 program. The New Haven Headstart program did not provide bilingual education for their children.

Results Administered in Spanish

Table 2A presents Part I Vocabulary and Part II Number results of Test of General Ability administered in Spanish to the three groups.

The results show that all three groups started at practically the same achievement level in vocabulary and numerical skill at pretesting. However, at posttesting, Hartford's 1972-73 bilingual program children showed <u>significantly higher</u> posttest achievement in vocabulary than both of the other groups. There was <u>no significant difference</u> between the posttest achievement in numerical skills among groups. In other words, the current year group did much better in vocabulary skills and just about the same in numerical skills compared to the other two groups.

Table 2A

Tests of General Ability Scores for Two Hartford Bilingual and One New Haven Non-Bilingual Classes of Preschool Children

Comparison of Pretests (Spanish Edition)

Group	N	CA	Pt I:VOCABULARY SD	M	t	Pt II:NUMBER SD	M	t
71-72 Hrtfd Bilingual	12	-	2.27	7.59		1.38	2.09	
					.15			.45
72-73 Hrtfd Bilingual	26	4-5	1.91	7.70		1.11	1.89	
					1.00			.21
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl	12	-	1.83	8.34		1.70	2.00	

Comparison of Posttests (Spanish Edition)

Group	N	CA	Pt I:VOCABULARY SD	M	t	Pt II:NUMBER SD	M	t
71-72 Hrtfd Bilingual	12	-	2.29	9.84		1.44	3.59	
					3.18**			1.95
72-73 Hrtfd Bilingual	26	5-0	1.57	12.16		1.54	2.58	
					6.83**			.21
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl	12	-	1.62	8.34		1.09	2.67	

Pre-Posttest Differences (Spanish Edition)

Group	N	Pt I:VOCABULARY SD	M	t	Pt II:NUMBER SD	M	t
71-72 Hrtfd Blngl Pre	12	2.27	7.59		1.38	2.09	
				2.85**			2.59**
71-72 Hrtfd Blngl Post	12	2.29	9.84		1.44	3.59	
72-73 Hrtfd Blngl Pre	26	1.91	7.70		1.11	1.89	
				9.30**			1.82
72-73 Hrtfd Blngl Post	26	1.57	12.16		1.54	2.58	
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl Pre	12	1.83	8.34		1.70	2.00	
				0			1.16
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl Post	12	1.62	8.34		1.09	2.67	

** Significant $< .01$

Results Administered in English

Table 2B presents Part I Vocabulary and Part II Number results of the Tests of General Ability administered in English to the three groups.

There was a difference of vocabulary achievement between two of the three groups at pretesting. Hartford's 1972-73 children showed a significantly higher pretest average than the non-bilingual group. No further comparisons should be made where children differ at pretesting. Also, there are some additional reasons why further comparisons should not be made. At posttesting, the English edition of the test followed too closely after the Spanish edition making it possible for many children to guess the correct responses by remembering how they responded to the picture when it was administered in Spanish. Further, a different tester administered the posttesting. Principally because of these three reasons, the scores in vocabulary when the test was administered in English are highly questionable.

While some of the same limitations stated above apply to children's responses to Part II Number administered in English, the limitations are not as severe. All three groups tested approximately the same in numerical skill at pretesting and all three groups tested approximately the same at posttesting. However, only the current year bilingual children and the non-bilingual children from New Haven made significantly higher posttest scores than pretest scores when the Test of General Abilities was administered in English.

Table 2B

Tests of General Ability Scores for Two Hartford Bilingual and One New Haven Non-Bilingual Classes of Preschool Children

Comparison of Pretests (English Edition)

Group	N	CA	Pt I:VOCABULARY SD	M	t	Pt II:NUMBER SD	M	t
71-72 Hrtfd Bilingual	12		1.31	4.50		1.00	1.59	
					1.87			.65
72-73 Hrtfd Bilingual	16	4-5	3.76	6.38		1.29	1.32	
					2.74**			.86
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl	12		1.38	3.59		0.80	1.67	

Comparison of Posttests (English Edition)

Group	N	CA	Pt I:VOCABULARY SD	M	t	Pt II:NUMBER SD	M	t
71-72 Hrtfd Bilingual	12		1.81	5.25		0.95	2.25	
					-			1.50
72-73 Hrtfd Bilingual	16	5-0	3.65***	11.57***		1.21	2.88	
					-			.25
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl	12		1.28	5.84		1.47	2.75	
					-			

Pre-Posttest Differences (English Edition)

Group	N	Pt I:VOCABULARY SD	M	t	Pt II:NUMBER SD	M	t
71-72 Hrtfd Blngl Pre	12	1.31	4.50		1.00	1.59	
				-			1.61
71-72 Hrtfd Blngl Post	12	1.81	5.25		0.95	2.25	
				-			
72-73 Hrtfd Blngl Pre	16	3.76	6.38		1.29	1.32	
				-			3.47**
72-73 Hrtfd Blngl Post	16	3.65	11.57		1.21	2.88	
				-			
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl Pre	12	1.38	3.59		0.80	1.67	2.25*
				-			
71-72 Nw Hvn Non-Blngl Post	12	1.28	5.84		1.47	2.75	

* Significant < .05

** Significant < .01

*** Questionable results. Limitations are discussed on page 18.

Recommendations for Future Testing

Spanish surnamed children not in the bilingual centers but in the School Readiness Program should be tested with the Test of General Ability rather than the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.

The Spanish edition of the Test of General Ability should be administered prior to the English edition. Both forms of the test should be available so that the English edition of the test can be administered immediately following the Spanish edition.

Wallace R. Roby
Compensatory Education Evaluation
Connecticut State Department
of Education

Names of schools where programs took place:

In Hartford, Ann Street School, Center Church, and Emanuel Lutheran.

In West Hartford: First Baptist, Temple Beth Israel, and Universalist.

In Wethersfield: First Church and St. Paul's Lutheran.

Duration in weeks of the direct services to pupils 36

Report the full time equivalent (f.t.e.) number of Title I-SADC supported staff who directly taught, tutored, or counseled pupils in the program. Where a staff member directed only one-quarter of the teaching day to program teaching-learning activities, show .25 as the number for that staff member. Also indicate the total program hours of direct teaching, tutoring, or counseling rendered weekly by this staff.

f.t.e. staff number		total teaching hours weekly
(10)	teachers	(250)
(10)	tutors or aides	(200)

Give the aggregate days of attendance for the school year of children and youth directly served by the project. 49,287

Give the aggregate days of membership for the school year of children and youth directly served by the project. 64,001

STANDARDIZED TEST INFORMATION FOR READING, MATH, AND LANGUAGE

Town Hartford Proj.# Type Program Preschool

Gr Lvl for Group Scores	Test Instrument Information: Name of Test	Test Area	Pre & Post Test Forms	No. of Pupils Tested	Raw Scores and Grade Equivalence: Time of Pre Test*	Mean Scores r.s. / g.e.	Time of Post Test*	Mean Scores r.s. / g.e.
Reading								
Gr 1								
Gr 2								
Gr 3								
Gr 4								
Gr 5								
Gr 6								
Math								
Gr 1								
Gr 2								
Gr 3								
Gr 4								
Gr 5								
Gr 6								
Language					CA at Pre Test	Mean Scores r.s. / MA	CA at Post Test	Mean Scores r.s. / MA
Pk	PPVT	Language	A / B	217	4-3	35 / 3-5	4-11	43 / 4-
K								

* Record date of testing in grade equivalent units. If the pretest is between September 15 and October 14 for fourth graders, record it as 4.1, for example. If the posttest is between May 15 and June 14, record it as 4.9. If during other months, use the same rationale.